

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND TRANSPORTATION

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN BOB DAVIES**, on February 5, 2001 at
9:05 A.M., in Room 317-B Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Bob Davies, Chairman (R)
Sen. Jack Wells, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. John Brueggeman (R)
Rep. Monica Lindeen (D)
Sen. Bea McCarthy (D)
Sen. Corey Stapleton (R)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: David Brown, Legislative Branch
Cyndie Lockett, Committee Secretary
Amy Sassano, OBPP

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and
discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: Consumer Counsel, 2/5/2001;
Legislative Branch, 2/5/2001
Executive Action:

HEARING ON CONSUMER COUNSEL

{Tape : 1; Side : A; Approx. Time Counter : 0 - 30}

Chairman Davies called the meeting to order.

The Consumer Counsel was presented by **Robert Nelson, Consumer Counsel**, who started on page A-12 with a description of the agency. He reminded the subcommittee 60 percent of the Counsel's overall budget is in contracted services and their case load varies from year to year. He then went over DP 1 on page A-13.

Sen. Wells asked about the figures **Mr. Nelson** provided not matching the workbook. **Dave Brown, Legislative Fiscal Division** answered **Sen. Wells's** question. **Sen. Wells** asked for **Mr. Nelson** to repeat the figures regarding the biennium budget. **Mr. Nelson** indicated the total present law fiscal 2002 was \$1,105,434 and the for total present law fiscal 2003 was \$1,107,449. The statewide adjustments are found at the bottom of A-12 **EXHIBIT (jgh29a02)**.

Sen. Stapleton asked about the 5.04 FTE and how his agency came up with it. **Mr. Nelson** said he was not exactly sure why but the .04 represents their legislative representative on the consumer committee, and the payments made to them for meetings throughout the year. This .04 goes to 5 legislative representatives serving as committee members.

Sen. Stapleton asked if the committee represents consumers or legislatures, or if it can do both? **Mr. Nelson** said they represent consumer interests and he believed most of the legislators feel they have consumer interests in mind as well. **Sen. McNutt** spoke in favor of the Consumer Counsel.

Chairman Davies called for Executive Action.

Sen. Stapleton moved to reduce the 5.04 FTE down to 5.00 FTE.

Amy Sassano, Office of Budget and Program Planning indicated to **Sen. Stapleton** if they take the .04 of the FTE they would not have the funds to pay the legislators working on the committee.

Rep. Lindeen moved to approve DP 1.

Sen. Wells asked for the history on this agency, as well as future agencies the subcommittee will hear. He would like to see the comparison before voting on Executive Action. **Rep. Lindeen**

withdrew the motion until further reference was provided on the budget.

Sen. Stapleton asked is there another way of doing the Consumer Counsel without paying the legislators? **Mrs. Sassano** indicated it is in statute that legislators will be paid. Discussion continued.

HEARING ON LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Lois Menzies, Executive Director of the Legislative Services Division discussed the Legislative Branch consolidated budget.

{Tape : 1; Side : B; Approx. Time Counter : 30 - 60}

Mrs. Menzies continued her discussion **EXHIBIT(jgh29a03)**. **Clayton Schenck, Legislative Fiscal Analyst** addressed the Legislature on behalf of the Legislative Branch.

Sen. Greg Jergeson discussed the budget and the Legislative Branch workload.

Sen. Dan McGee spoke on behalf of the Legislative budget, including the time spent in committee, and how they worked on the new proposals.

Sen. Tom Beck spoke in favor of the Legislative Budget and emphasized NCSL and PNWER. He indicated there should be more funding in the Legislative Branch.

Mr. Schenck continued his discussion of the Legislative Budget, including a comment on **Sen. Stapleton's** position regarding FTE. Indicating he understood **Sen. Stapleton** did not know how he would change it, but the FTE could be fixed. He told **Sen. Stapleton** they would figure out a way to fix it. Then he continued on with the budget, and a handout **EXHIBIT(jgh29a01)** which he discussed with the subcommittee.

{Tape : 2; Side : A; Approx. Time Counter : 0 - 30}

Mr. Schenck continued his explanation of his handout, including another handout **EXHIBIT(jgh29a04)** requesting NCSL/CSG dues and participation for the 2003 Biennium Budget.

Mrs. Menzies described the Legislative Service Division budget, including a handout **EXHIBIT(jgh29a05)** that would follow with her discussion. She asked for the budget to be amended to

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include \$28,000 for legislator salary and expenses to participate in the Council of State Governments' Legislative Council on River Governance for the 2002-2003 biennium.

Rep. Lindeen requested specifics on present law adjustments for the Legislative Branch Computer Systems Plan. **Hank Trenk, Director of Office of Legislative Information Technology** commented the specifics are in the plan, he would get the plan to **Rep. Lindeen**.

{Tape : 2; Side : B; Approx. Time Counter : 30 - 60}

Rep. Lindeen asked who services the contract for the web site. **Mr. Trenk** answered ISD and Office of Public Instruction. **Mr. Schenck** discussed the Legislative Fiscal Analysis Division found on page A-8.

Scott Seacat, Legislative Auditor of Legislative Audit Division discussed his agency, DP's and a New Proposal. His agency is found on pages A-10 and A-11.

Mary Fairchild, National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) spoke on behalf of her agency. Mrs. Fairchild gave the subcommittee a handout **EXHIBIT(jgh29a06)** on her agency.

Mr. Schenk told the committee NCSL is a great resource.

{Tape : 3; Side : A; Approx. Time Counter : 0 - 15}

Rep. Lindeen questioned the network connection in the Chambers. **Mrs. Menzies** informed Rep. Lindeen they thought it would be more work because it depended on the type of computer used the capacity, and how its configured. Mrs. Menzies hoped to supply computers specifications and give options to the Legislatures.

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ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 11:30 A.M.

REP. BOB DAVIES, Chairman

CYNDIE LOCKETT, Secretary

BD/CL

EXHIBIT (jgh29aad)